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BOOK REVIEWS.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS HISTORY, APPLICATION AND CONSTRUCTION. By David K. Watson, of the Columbus, Ohio, Bar. Chicago: Callaghan and Co., 1910, two volumes, pp. xxxiii, 1959.

This work is a distinctly valuable addition to the already voluminous literature of the subject. In plan and scope it is quite unique and therein lies much of its value. The plan of following the divisions of the Constitution into articles, sections and clauses, instead of treating similar or related provisions together, might be open to criticism except that the author's plan lends itself well to the historical treatment which he has adopted with such distinct advantage. The history of each provision is discussed from the time of its introduction into the constitutional convention, through all or at least most of its interpretation at the hands of the federal courts. In many instances the origin of the provision is traced back to the Articles of Confederation, or other earlier sources. The Journal of the Convention, Elliot's Debates, The Federalist and Supreme Court decisions have been freely used and quoted from. The result is an historical survey of our constitutional law, which has not hitherto been available in any one work, and which is clarifying and otherwise helpful to the searcher who has not time or opportunity to go to the "first sources" for himself. The first three chapters form an historical introduction, beginning with the first meeting of the Continental Congress in 1774. This is followed by a somewhat detailed consideration of each provision of the constitution. The citation of cases is by no means exhaustive, but most of the important cases are discussed, some of them quite fully. Nor has the author, as he frankly says in his preface, given much expression to his own opinions as to the adequacy of the Constitution, nor as to the soundness of its interpretation by the courts. But he presented a clear, interesting statement of our constitutional law as it is. The fifteen appendices include the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution, the Randolph, Pinckney, Paterson and Hamilton plans of a constitution, and other historical documents. There are some slight inaccuracies, mostly of the clerical type, but considering the great size of the work and its general excellence, they do not demand detailed mention. The author seems impressed with Mr. Hannis Taylor and his "discovery" of Pelatiah Webster and his pamphlet. See p. 81, n. The work is not a profound treatise, in the sense of a philosophical study in political science, but it shows great care and intelligence in its preparation and it well fulfills the function proposed for it by the author. H. M. B.